DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 185 112 TM 800 130

AUTHOR Shelton, Elaine
TITLE The Adult Performance Level Competency-Based High School Diploma Program. Performance Requirements. Fifth Edition, Summer 1979.
INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.:
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 51p.
AVAILABLE FROM Adult Performance Level Project, University of Texas at Austin, Education Annex, S-21, Austin, TX 78712 ($2.00).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education: Basic Skills: *Competency Based Education: Daily Living Skills: Functional Literacy: *High School Equivalency Programs; Learning Activities: Program Costs: *Program Design: Staff Role: *Student Educational Objectives: Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS Adult Performance Level: Texas

ABSTRACT

The Adult Performance Level (APL) Competency-Based High School Diploma (CBHSD) Program in Texas is briefly described. The program was developed as a flexible and effective alternative to a conventional high school diploma program and to the General Educational Development (GED) test. Program goals are expressed as competency outcomes which are demonstrated as observed behaviors in three areas: basic skills: life skills (generalized competencies): and optional skills appropriate to individual goals (individualized competencies). Job descriptions are provided for program personnel, including the local adult education directors, counselors, teachers, evaluators, task forces, the local principal, and local school board. Procedures are described for general orientation and placement of students: and learning activities and student evaluations are discussed. For planning purposes, potential cost items are enumerated. (APL instructional objectives and life skill activities are appended). (MH)

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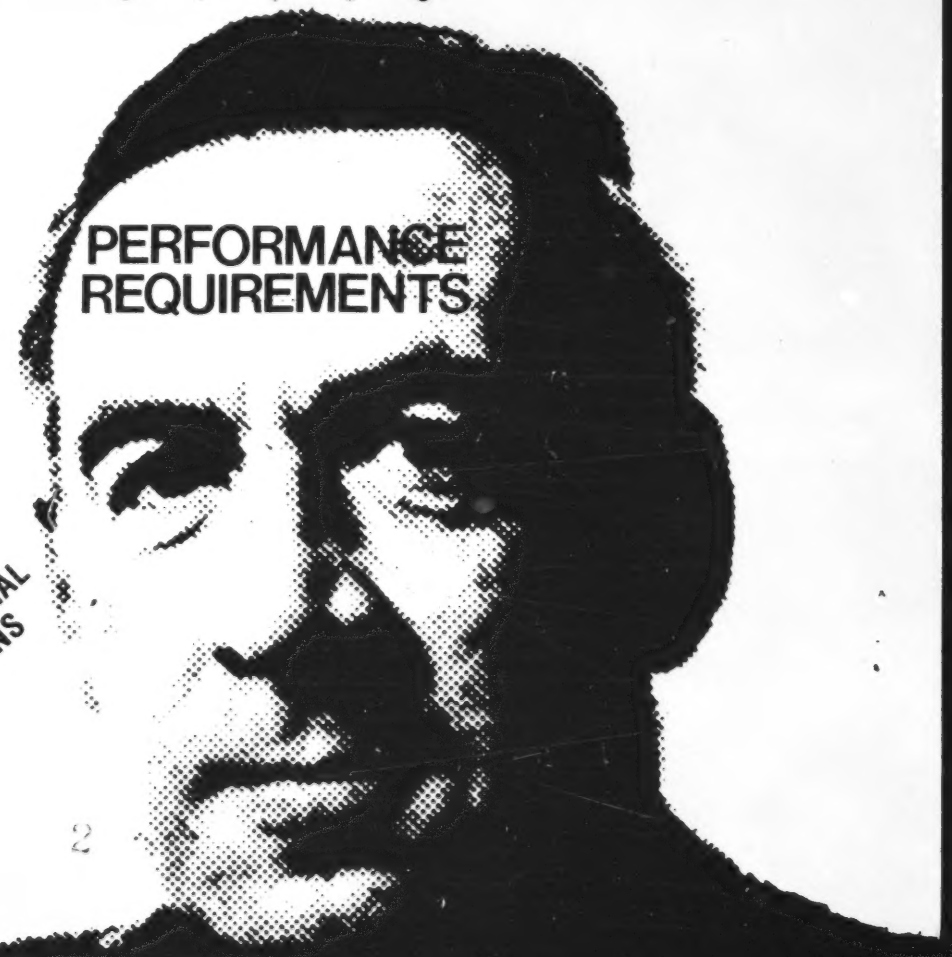

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THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL COMPETENCY-BASED HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Elaine Shelton

Fifth Edition, Summer 1979

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I. Needs and Rationale

In September of 1971, the United States Office of Education funded what is now known as the Adult Performance Level Project, or APL, housed at The University of Texas at Austin. The project staff was charged with two specific objectives. The first was to define adult literacy in terms of actual competencies performed in everyday life tasks. For too long, literacy had been defined as the ability to read and write, or to read on a certain grade level. Such definitions said nothing about an individual's ability to cope with the activities encountered in daily living. To this end, extensive research and interviewing were undertaken to determine just what these everyday needs are. These needs are the objectives found in Appendix A of this booklet.

The second task assigned to the APL Project staff was to assess these competencies for the adult (18-65 years) population of the continental United States. Surveys measuring functional adult literacy for Texas and for the nation as a whole were conducted. Both surveys demonstrated that there are shockingly large numbers of adults in the population who function with difficulty. Results show that nearly 20% of the adults in the nation and in Texas function with difficulty, according to APL criteria, or in other words, cannot function successfully with minimal survival and life coping skills. These persons are referred to as APL 1's. APL 2's are those persons who are functional but not proficient in performing everyday life tasks. APL 3's, on the other hand, are those adults who are proficient in coping with the basic activities required of an adult in today's society. Not even half (46.3%) of the adult population of the U. S. fits this last definition.

Based on this data, a natural evolution of the program suggested that action be taken to raise the functional competency skills of undereducated adults. Thus the project staff turned its focus toward developing a curriculum for the implementation of APL functional competency objectives.

Recognizing the need to motivate the adult learner, whose attrition rate in adult education programs has been notoriously high, the APL Project staff felt that if the learner could see the value of remaining in and completing a relevant adult education program, the result might be a workable, goal-oriented program in which an adult student could be interested and even enthusiastic. Such value could be in the form of a regular high school diploma awarded to the adult for demonstrating that he possesses the competencies offered through life skills-oriented adult education classes, if needed, in combination with competencies gained through experience.

The catalyst for the idea of the APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program was in the form of a presentation by Dr. Ruth Nickse at a meeting of the Adult Performance Level Study's Advisory Committee held in Austin in March 1975. Dr. Nickse was Director of the Central New York External High School Diploma Program under the aegis of the Regional Learning Service of Central New York and the New York State Department of Education. It was this New York program which served as a model from which the Adult Performance Level Competency-based High School Diploma Program was adapted.

This booklet will serve to describe the APL Competency-based High School Diploma (CBHSD) Program developed for adults as a flexible and credible alternative to the conventional four-year high school diploma program based on Carnegie units and to the General Educational Development (GED) Test. Eligibility requirements to be awarded the competency-based high school diploma are the same as those required of persons awarded the GED (i.e., in Texas, 17 years of

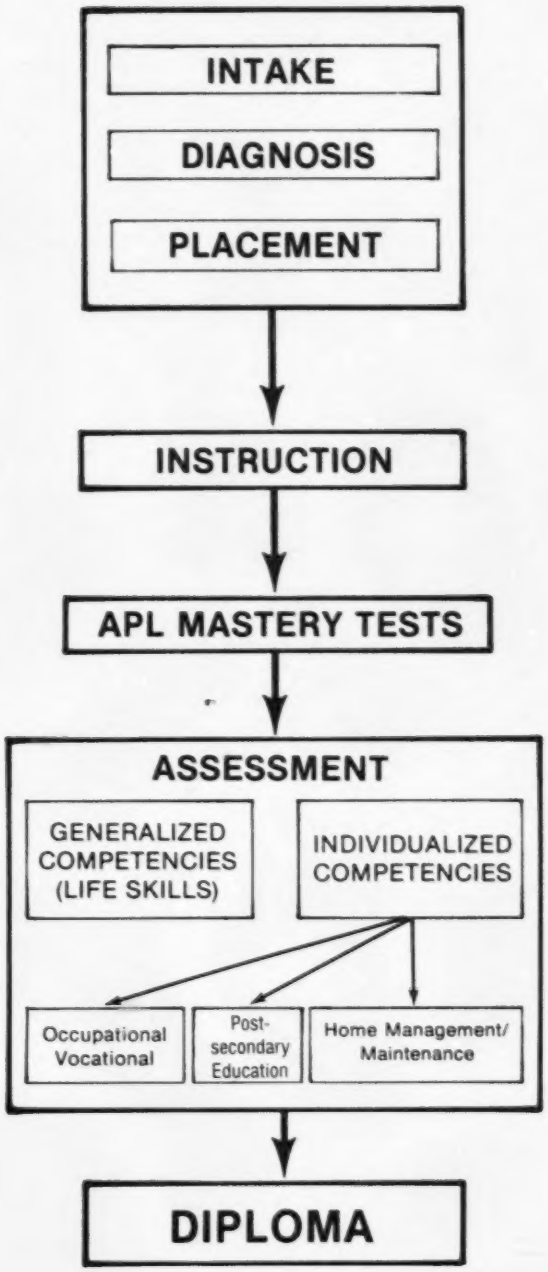
age or older, with proof of having been out of school at least one year if under 18 years of age). Criteria for this competency-based diploma have been developed with the object of combining student-centered flexibility, allowing for a wide range of individual differences, with quality standards which are credible to employers and admissions officers in postsecondary institutions. Should a transcript of the client's high school work be asked for, a comprehensive portfolio could be offered for perusal by a client's future employer and/or college admissions officer which would state the specific competencies of the diploma recipient. This should be far more informational to a prospective employer than simply having the knowledge that the client has a high school diploma, a document which is often said by employers to be a useless piece of paper which says nothing about a person's actual competencies.

Concerning the need for such a program, latest national census data indicate that approximately 55 million "out-of-school" persons age 18 or over do not possess a high school diploma. Many who compose the cadre of persons who could benefit most from a competency-based diploma program are adults who did not finish high school for reasons of being economically disadvantaged and had to drop out of school to work, who were confined because of illness or injury during substantial periods of time during their high school career, or who were disenchanted with the conventional curriculum or rigid structure of the high school experience.

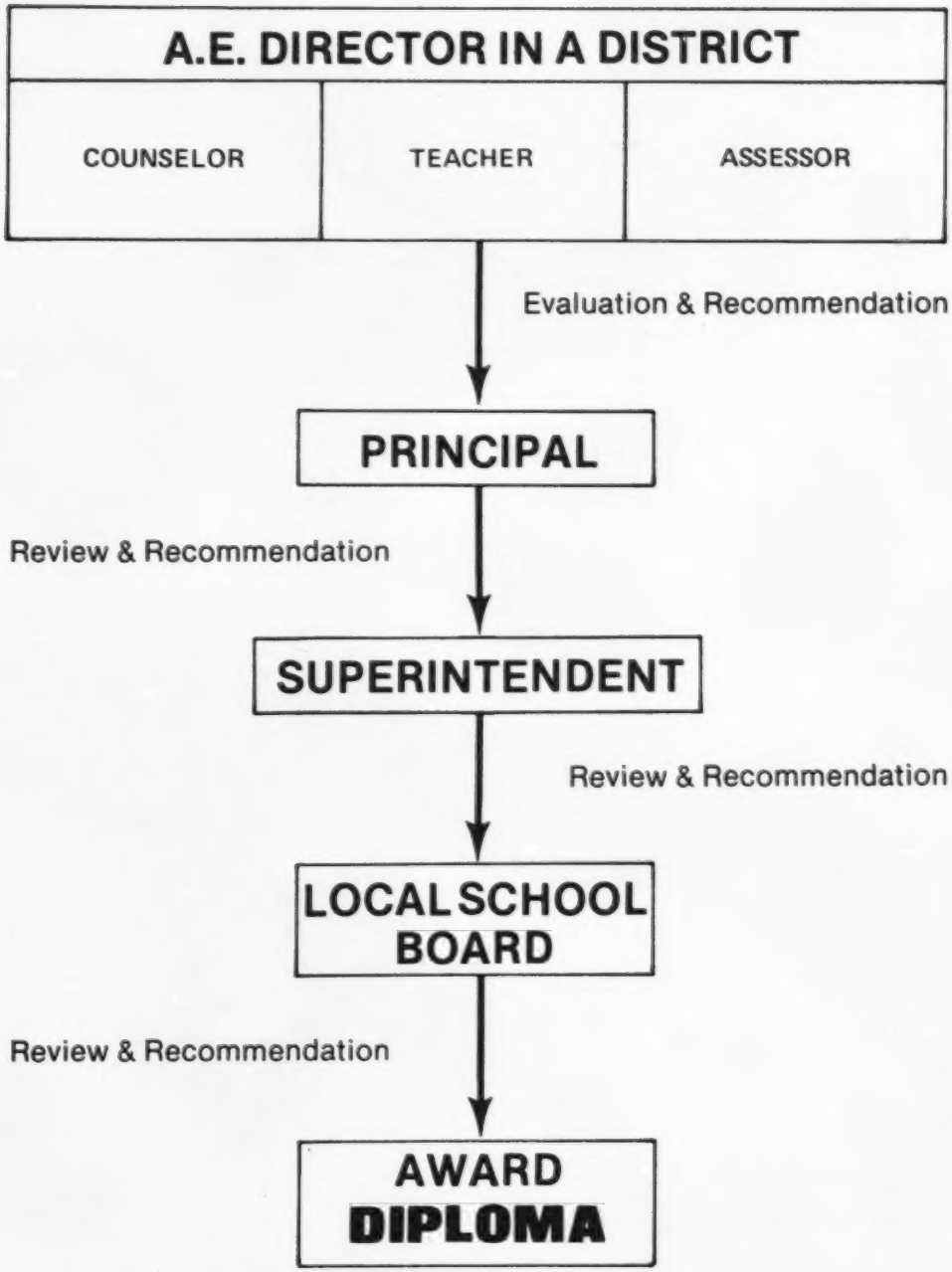
The competency-based diploma goals are expressed as competency outcomes which are demonstrated as observed behavior. All candidates are expected to meet specific coping skills objectives in certain common areas of basic competencies (e.g., communication, computation, and life skills discussed later as Generalized Competencies), as well as in optional areas that are appropriate to their individual goals (discussed later as Individualized Competencies).

These criteria permit the use of a wide diversity of assessment instruments and techniques . . . the aim is a humanistic determination of competencies which are relevant to life situations . . . in all cases, the means focus on the actual competency attained rather than on such normative standards as amount of time spent or grade earned.

COMPETENCY-BASED HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
PROPOSED PROCESS



COMPETENCY-BASED HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
PROPOSED ORGANIZATION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT



II. Organization

The Adult Education Director from each local school district, working in close contact with his/her superintendent, generally oversees the functioning of the Competency-based High School Diploma Program. It is his/her responsibility to appoint persons who will carry out counseling, teaching, and assessing functions. We recommend that a site start small. This generally translates to beginning with no more than 15 CBHSD students. This number of students can easily be handled by two persons carrying out the three job functions mentioned above.

The Assessor certifies fulfillment of diploma criteria to the principal of the school issuing the competency-based diploma and/or the local school district superintendent or his/her designated representative(s). If they are also satisfied that the requirements have been met, they pass the recommendation on to the local school board, which has the final authority to award the diploma. This is a conventional high school diploma. It is not an equivalency certificate, nor does it read "competency-based."

The following is an outline of the job duties and responsibilities for each of these job descriptions. Insofar as possible and practical (some job tasks occur at the same time as others or all during the program), these job duties are listed in the order in which they are generally accomplished. A more detailed explanation of the functions of each can be found in Chapters III, IV, and V of this resource.

A. Local Adult Education Director

1. Appoints persons to carry out counseling, teaching, and assessing functions of the program
2. Appoints a local APL Competency-based High School Diploma Task Force

3. Oversees the functioning of the program

4. Conducts ongoing evaluation of the program

B. Counselor

1. Establishes rapport with clients

2. Gathers background, interest, and aptitude data on clients

3. Gives clients detailed explanation of the alternatives available, including the entire process of the competency-based diploma program

4. Diagnoses clients' skill levels through the use of a skills test

5. Diagnoses clients' APL levels through the use of the Content Area Measures

6. Refers clients who do not make a satisfactory score on the skills test and/or the Content Area Measures to the Teacher for learning activities

7. Refers clients who make satisfactory scores on skills test and who score as APL 3 in all objectives within all content areas to the Teacher for Life Skills

8. Submits clients' records to Assessor or Teacher when needed

9. Arranges for or administers a standardized test of ability to do post-secondary school work (for clients in Postsecondary Education sequence)

10. Assesses satisfactory completion of Postsecondary Education Plan (for clients in Postsecondary Education sequence)

11. Conducts ongoing evaluation of program

*12. Maintains liaison with individuals qualified by education and/or experience to assess performance in various occupations[1]

*13. Establishes contact with the community at large to create an awareness and acceptance of the program

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[1]The asterisk beside the last two responsibilities of the Counselor, Teacher, and Assessor denotes that, according to the work load of these persons, these jobs cound be done by any one or all of them. For further details on these job duties, see Individualized Competencies/Occupational-Vocational/Performance in Chapter V.

C. Teacher

1. Prescribes learning activities for the client based on the information gained from the Interest Survey, the diagnostic skills test, the Content Area Measures, discussion with the client, and from the pretests keyed to each of the APL objectives
2. Teaches toward APL skills and objectives using the APL curriculum
3. Uses materials/resources from the community to supplement activities in the APL curriculum
4. Determines clients' mastery of APL objectives after instruction through the (re)administration of the Content Area Measures (only for clients who initially scored as overall APL 1's or 2's on one or more Content Area Measure(s))
5. Introduces and conducts preliminary evaluation of Life Skills Activities (to all clients)
6. If applicable, administers evaluations in state-mandated subject areas (to all clients)
7. Conducts ongoing evaluation of the program

*8. Maintains liaison with individuals qualified by education and/or experience to assess performance in various occupations

*9. Establishes contact with community at large to create an awareness and acceptance of the program

D. Assessor

1. Assesses satisfactory completion of the series of Generalized Life Skills Activities for all clients
2. Collects documentation of entry-level job skills through either the employer's questionnaire, performance, or a work credential such as

a state license or competency-based union card (for clients in Occupational/Vocational sequence) or performance only (for clients in Home Management/Maintenance sequence)

3. Certifies fulfillment of diploma criteria to local school administrator
4. Conducts ongoing evaluation of assessment procedures and results
5. Has CBHSD graduate complete program evaluation and follow-up forms

*6. Maintains liaison with individuals qualified by education and/or experience to assess performance in various occupations

*7. Establishes contact with the community at large to create an awareness and acceptance of the program

E. Competency-based High School Diploma Task Force

1. Conducts ongoing review and evaluation of the program in order to provide recommendations for the revision of the competency-based diploma requirements
2. Provides a vital link to the community at large to create an awareness and acceptance of the program

The appointment of this task force is an important responsibility of the AE Director. Because of the nature of these responsibilities, it is advisable to have a broad cross section of the community as members of this task force. The number of members should be kept to a workable limit but should ideally include many, if not all, of the following persons: high school teachers, counselors and principals, potential or former competency-based diploma candidates, ABE personnel, a State Education Agency representative, counselors and admissions officers from postsecondary institutions, and representatives from labor, business and industry.

F. Local Principal and/or Superintendent

1. Approves Assessor's recommendations for awarding the diploma

2. Passes the recommendations to the local school board

G. Local School Board

Responsible for giving final approval for awarding the high school diploma to a client

III. General Orientation and Placement

Orientation

Upon entering the local learning facility, the client is first introduced to the Counselor who, in turn, sits down with the client to gather educational, occupational, and personal background information on the client and ascertain his/her interests and goals for life in general and future education in particular. The Counselor establishes good rapport with the client by exhibiting a friendly, warm, accepting attitude to let the client know that there is a genuine concern and interest in him as an individual and that there is an open-mindedness as to the client's perceived needs and goals. After listening to the client's assessment of his/her needs and aspirations, the Counselor advises the client of his/her educational options (i.e., the four-year conventional high school program built on Carnegie units, the GED, the CBHSD, etc.). Included in the client's orientation to the APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program will be a brief introduction to the philosophy behind the Adult Performance Level Project (competency should be judged in terms of the ability to satisfactorily perform the tasks encountered in everyday life) and how this philosophy lends itself to granting credit for life experiences. The client should decide, with the advice of the Counselor, which of the programs best serves his/her interests and needs, as well as his intellectual and financial resources.

Should the client choose the APL Competency-based Diploma Program, the Counselor should explain in even greater detail what the various steps will be in the entire evaluation so that the client will have a firm understanding of what will be expected of him in terms of the areas in which he will demonstrate competency. The fact that at no time will the client be tricked should

also be emphasized. He will be told everything which will be expected of him in order to eliminate as much pressure and anxiety as possible (so that inability to perform a task can more accurately be assessed as lacking competency in a particular skill rather than a product of confusion stemming from tension, uncertainty, and ambiguity). Although the orientation should be detailed, the explanation should be kept as clear and concise as possible so the candidate will not be overwhelmed by the complexities of the program. The following is a description of the various steps in assessment through which the individual student must pass on his way to the APL competency-based high school diploma.

Placement

Diagnostic Skills Test. Before any materials can be assigned to a student, his/her skill level must be diagnosed. In this context, diagnosis refers to the identification of a learner's strengths and weaknesses. Several tests are available for the Counselor to use in diagnosing a client's skill levels. One of these is the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). It tests the skills of reading, math, and language. In this case, language refers to grammar, spelling, and writing or composition skills. If the client can read, he/she should be administered the M form of the TABE to determine skill level. Clients scoring below a 6th grade reading level should be referred to the Teacher for learning activities in those skill areas in which he/she demonstrated a weakness. Special care should be given to teach the skills AS THEY ARE APPLIED TO THE APL CONTENT AREAS.

The APL Content Area Measures. A client's functional competency is measured in two dimensions--in terms of SKILLS and CONTENT AREA KNOWLEDGE. A client's competency in the skill areas is initially measured by the skills test discussed above. APL clients scoring at the 6th grade reading level or above should be administered the APL Content Area Measures to determine level in

each content area. The Content Area Measures are five separate instruments, each keyed to one of the five APL general knowledge (content) areas of Consumer Economics, Occupational Knowledge, Health, Community Resources, and Government and Law. These Content Area Measures can be obtained by contacting:

The APL Program
American College Testing Program
P. O. Box 168
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
319/356-3943

IV. APL Learning Activities

Should the client score as an APL 1 or 2 in any areas of any of the competency tests, he/she should be channeled by the Counselor into learning activities offered by local ABE centers or other educational facilities organized to teach toward the APL objectives. The Counselor explains the hours and policies of the adult education center and introduces the client to the Teacher. The Counselor works with the Teacher in order to delineate the client's strengths and weaknesses to help the Teacher better provide the individualized learning activities.

These learning activities are organized toward teaching APL objectives. Ideally, if a site already has a person familiar with life skills curricula, this person could be the teacher. Even if such expertise is not available, the APL instructional materials developed by the APL Project's curriculum writers should prove to be extremely helpful in aiding the new APL teacher. There are specific materials for each of the APL objectives. Included in the materials are the learning steps the student would go through in order to achieve mastery of the APL objectives. Each learning step incorporates the application of a skill to a particular knowledge. Also included are the materials needed to teach each of the learning steps. The client is placed into the materials at whatever level of competency he/she is shown to be functioning through the administration, by the Teacher, of diagnostic tests within each module keyed to each APL objective. Client interest should be a prime consideration of which APL objectives are taught first within those content areas in which he/she has demonstrated a weakness.

In many cases, materials are provided for an activity. In other cases, materials may be suggested. If a suggested material is unavailable to a Teacher

at a certain time or site, improvisation would be in order to meet the curriculum suggestions. The Teacher should establish and maintain information flow with secondary, postsecondary, and correspondence institutions whose educational programs are available in the area. He/she also should seek out learning resources in corporations, trade unions, social agencies, and cultural institutions which might have programs and materials which lend themselves to the learning of life skills. The learning activities and materials are suggestions. The Teacher should feel free to improvise and adapt these materials and activities in order to individualize the curriculum to meet each student's unique needs and goals. It is hoped that, with the goal of ongoing program improvement, major revisions and adaptations in either content or format done by a site will be shared with APL staff.

In November 1979, the APL curriculum entitled THE APL SERIES: Coping in Today's Society will be available from Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Additional information may be obtained by contacting:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
Center for Lifelong Education
757 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017
212/888-4444

APL Mastery Tests

It should be pointed out that the Counselor is the person who directs the client into the APL learning activities. The Teacher is the person who decides when the client is ready to move out of the learning activities and into a new phase of the CBHSD Program. When the Teacher is satisfied that the client has mastered the APL objectives, he/she re-administers those Content Area Measures in which the client initially scored as a 1 or 2. When the client makes a satisfactory score on all the Content Area Measures (mastery is defined as scoring at the APL 3 level on all objectives within each Content Area Measure),

he/she is ready to progress to the final evaluation of Generalized and Individualized Competencies. If he does not score at the satisfactory level, he should be given additional learning activities.

V. Assessment

All clients must satisfactorily complete all three major phases of the APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program, namely (a) score as an APL 3 on all objectives within the Content Area Measures; (b) satisfactorily perform the Life Skills Activities under the Generalized Competencies portion of the program; and (c) demonstrate the ability to perform adequately in either an occupational/vocational area, a postsecondary education area, or the areas of Home Management/Maintenance. All three of these segments of the competency-based diploma program are mandatory, but their sequence is optional. For example, a client may choose to demonstrate competence in the Individualized area before, after or concurrent with demonstrating competence in the Generalized Life Skills area. He may also be accomplishing some of the Generalized and/or Individualized tasks at the same time he is engaged in the learning activities necessary to pass the APL mastery tests.

After the client scores as an APL 3 in each objective within all five Content Area Measures (that is, after he demonstrates that he is functionally literate), the Teacher gives and explains to the client (if this has not already been done) the activities he will need to complete in order to meet the Generalized and Individualized Competency portions of the program. The details of this two-pronged assessment (Generalized Competencies and Individualized Competencies) follow.

Generalized Competencies

The Generalized Competencies portion of the CBHSD Program features completion (to the satisfaction of the Teacher and Assessor) of the Life Skills Activities found in Appendix B. These activities cross all APL content areas (Consumer Economics, Occupational Knowledge, Community Resources, Health, and

Government and Law) and all skill areas (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, computation, problem-solving, and interpersonal relations). Except for those activities which specifically call for discussion, tasks can be worked on at the learning center, library, the client's home, or any other place of the client's choosing.

There will be some overlap of tasks called for in the learning activities which make up the APL curriculum and in the Generalized Life Skills Activities. The client should not be asked to duplicate tasks called for in the Life Skills Activities if these have already been assessed to have been accomplished satisfactorily during his/her progression through the APL curriculum and vice versa. The desirability of preventing replication of tasks further points out the importance and role of the complete documentation of all activities which are mastered by the client.

Individualized Competencies

It is left to the discretion of the client in which of the following three categories he/she wishes to be assessed.

1. Occupational/Vocational--There are three alternatives available to clients who choose assessment in this area.
   a. Employer's Testimony--This option is open to clients who are presently employed and who have been working for the same employer for at least one year. The client's immediate supervisor is asked to fill out a questionnaire. Open-ended questions cover such areas as length of employment, job duties and responsibilities, and degree of employer satisfaction with performance; other questions (specifically those relating to such non-skill characteristics as absenteeism and interpersonal relations) are assessed on a scale of from 1 to 5 by the employer,

with a score of one indicating the lowest rating for a characteristic and five the highest. The local school district's Assessor or task force should feel free to make whatever additions, deletions, or revisions they feel would make the questionnaire one which better elicits the desired information.

b. Performance--This option is for clients who (1) are not presently employed, (2) have had less than one year's work experience just prior to the assessment, (3) are self-employed or employed by a relative, or (4) do not attain a satisfactory score on the employer's questionnaire. The assessment of performance is accomplished by a professional in the vocational area in which the client wishes to be evaluated. This specialist could be a master craftsman or vocational education teacher. As previously mentioned, it is the job of either the Counselor, the Teacher, or the Assessor, depending upon their respective work loads, to locate these professionals in each field. Reputation, word-of-mouth, and even the Yellow Pages are channels through which such professionals may be selected and approached. Ideally, the professional, when first approached by the Counselor, Teacher, or Assessor, would be familiarized with the concept and process of the APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program. Only after the Counselor, Teacher, or Assessor makes the judgment that this particular professional would be open-minded and accepting of the program and a fair and competent judge of the client's performance should they suggest to the professional that he might take part in the actual assessment of a client's entry-level job skills. Where possible, vocational performance

assessments should be carried out in an on-the-job-setting. The professional who is actually conducting the performance assessment should list those criteria for satisfactory demonstration of entry-level job skills in his/her field before the formal performance assessment begins. Numerous handbooks, usually available in public libraries and vocational schools, list competencies needed for specific occupations. These may help the performance assessor to recall proficiencies which he might otherwise overlook. The competencies which the client will be expected to demonstrate should be discussed with the client by the Assessor and perhaps even explained by the professional assessor to the client prior to his/her being asked to demonstrate these competencies.

Should the client pass this portion of the program, he/she is judged ready to receive his/her diploma. Should he not perform adequately, he would be referred to appropriate vocational education courses or programs by either the Counselor or Teacher. Many times qualified professionals can be found who are willing to perform such assessments free of charge, but for those who require compensation, a fee commensurate with their level of expertise and/or experience might be paid. The job of locating and recruiting professional assessors provides one of several opportunities open to the Counselor, Teacher, or Assessor to educate the community at large about the CBHSD. These implementers might also speak before civic organizations to foster a better understanding and acceptance of the program among the general public.

c. Credential--This option is for clients who possess such credentials as a current competency-based union card or state license (e.g., cosmetology or plumbing) which attests to their occupational skill level. Upon presentation to the Assessor, such documentation can be used alone to fulfill the Occupational/Vocational requirement.

2. Postsecondary Education--This sequence is designed primarily for the client who wants a high school diploma so that he can go into postsecondary studies. These clients must meet the following requirements.

   a. Present evidence of ability to do college-level work by presenting proof of having earned at least nine semester hours of college credit or by achieving an acceptable score on a standardized college entrance test such as the SAT or ACT.[2] Each individual school district determines which one of several accredited tests it will use and the acceptable score each student must attain for this part of the assessment.

   b. The second part of the Postsecondary Education requirement is the compilation of a Postsecondary Education Plan by the diploma candidate. This plan should present evidence that the client has given considerable thought to the considerations and problems involved in postsecondary study, particularly educational aims and aptitudes and the feasibility of further education in terms of financial aid. The Assessor is responsible for reviewing the contents of the Postsecondary Education Plan and passing on its acceptability.

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[2] SAT--Scholastic Aptitude Test; ACT--American College Testing Program

Should the client fail to demonstrate satisfactory achievement in this portion of the program, he/she is referred to college preparatory courses by either the Counselor or Teacher.

3. Home Management/Maintenance--The Assessor explains that under this optional sequence, the client demonstrates a satisfactory level of achievement judged by specialists in an area chosen by the client which is not covered under the Occupational/Vocational or Post-secondary Education categories. Homemakers probably compose the largest group which fits into this category. This group in the population was conceptualized as desiring a high school diploma for two distinct reasons.

   a. Homemakers may want a diploma for self-actualization. Parents may feel inadequate and embarrassed over not being able to help their school-age children with their homework. This inability to help their children on this level may gnaw away at their self-esteem both as they see themselves and as they perceive their children to see them. Or perhaps children may question the necessity or desirability of getting their high school diploma, holding up their parents as models who, without this credential, seem reasonably well satisfied with their lives. Parents, often realizing the chances denied them in life by reason of not having a diploma, want a better lot for their offspring and desire to become better models. Such persons desiring a high school diploma would be evaluated on the adequate performance of home management skills in the judgment of a specialist in the field, such as a home economist or home economics teacher. Should the clients be

judged as not possessing adequate skills in the homemaking area, they would be directed by the Teacher or Counselor into appropriate courses or programs to gain such competencies.

b. Homemakers may want a high school diploma in order to get a job outside the home. In such cases, clients could be assessed in either homemaking skills or in the skill area in which they think they may wish to seek employment. In the latter case, their performance would be assessed under the Occuaptional/ Vocational sequence by a professional in the client's chosen field. Again, if they did not demonstrate satisfactorily the necessary competencies as judged by the professional assessor, they should be placed into vocational courses or programs until they obtain the required skills at the level of competency where they could pass the performance assessment.

Competency-based High School Diploma Portfolio Contents

Throughout the entire APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program, the Assessor will compile a portfolio for each client. This portfolio may serve as a transcript of the client's progress through the entire program. It should include the following items, depending upon which of the three Individualized Competency categories the client chooses. The portfolio contents are numbered, but this is only for the purpose of this booklet, since the sequence in which the portfolio activities are accomplished should be individualized according to the needs and interests of the client, as stated earlier.

A. Occupational/Vocational Sequence

1. Counselor's Checklist
2. Results profile from the diagnostic skills test

3. Results profile from the Content Area Measures (as pretests and, if applicable, as mastery tests)

4. Documentation of having performed learning activities (if applicable)

5. Documentation of having met history and/or Texas Constitution requirements[3]

6. Documentation of ability to perform Life Skills Activities (The Teacher will need to paraphrase the responses of the clients to those activities which call for oral responses.)

7. Employer's questionnaire--or

7. Documentation of satisfactory entry-level job performance--or

7. Photostat or other documentation of union card or state license for accreditation of job skills

B. Postsecondary Education Sequence

1-6. (Same as for Occupational/Vocational category)

7. Documentation of at least nine hours earned from a college--or

7. Documentation of satisfactory score on a standardized test measuring ability to do college or vocational school work

8. Postsecondary Education Plan

C. Home Management/Maintenance Sequence

1-6. (Same as for Occupational/Vocational and Postsecondary Education Sequences)

7. Documentation of satisfactory performance in the area of home management or home maintenance

As previously discussed in Chapter II, this comprehensive portfolio documenting a client's progress through the APL Competency-based High School Diploma program is presented by the Assessor to the local school principal or district superintendent. They, in turn, review the portfolio and recommend to the local school board whether a candidate should be awarded the diploma.

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[3]At some time during a client's progression through, and before his completion of, the CBHSD Program in Texas, the Assessor must administer a test on American and Texas history and the Texas Constitution in order to fulfill a legislated requirement for all graduates of Texas high schools. Similar requirements may be mandated in other states.

VI. Program Evaluation

During the entire program, there will be a continuous process of evaluation, recommendation, and revision. Input will be expected from administrators, the CBHSD Counselors, Teachers and Assessors, the professional assessors of occupational performance, the Central Staff, the Task Forces, the clients, and the community at large. Such a continuous feedback system will be implemented through periodic telephone communications and follow-up visits from the Central Staff to monitor on-site activities, gather data, answer and ask questions, and, hopefully, ameliorate concerns before they have a chance to become large problems. Forms for program evaluation which will be filled out will also elicit reactions and suggestions from both staff and clients. A follow-up questionnaire to check the status of the CBHSD graduate, sent out periodically after his/her completion of the program, will also be used for evaluative purposes.

VII. Budget

Starting a new program always involves some additional expense. In the case of the CBHSD Program, the amount of additional expense required will vary from one district to another depending on a variety of factors. For example, many teachers will develop the necessary supplemental materials from no-cost local community resources, while other teachers may elect to purchase their materials. Some districts may be equipped to deliver staff development training locally, while others may find it necessary to send their teachers away for training. Some districts will elect to employ and train their own Assessor. In other areas, the Adult Educational Cooperative or the Educational Service Center will establish a regional CBHSD Counseling/Assessment Center where service may be "purchased" on an "as-needed" basis. Depending on the number of districts participating, this regional approach may prove to be a very cost-effective solution to the assessment requirement.

For planning purposes, there are some potential cost items that should be considered.

1. Personnel training--One two-day pre-service workshop, with the possibility of refresher training to be scheduled later in the year
2. Instructional materials
   a. One complete APL Instructional System--Will range up to $1,000 depending on the number of student workbooks and whether they are to be re-used.
   b. Supplementary instructional materials--As may be requested by teachers
   c. Counseling, testing, and assessment instruments--$12 to $20 per student (Student may be required to pay for these.)

3. Additional personnel--Provided a Counseling/Assessment Center is available, no additional adult education personnel should be necessary, unless significant additional enrollment of students occurs as a result of implementing this new program.

As the program gains expanded public recognition and support, it is possible that some employers will be willing to defray their employee's instructional and assessment costs. The interaction of CETA job training programs with CBHSD programs is another potential for helping defray expenses while offering services which are mutually supportive.

VIII. Conclusion

By the time a person has progressed through the entire APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program, he/she will have demonstrated (1) that he/she is functionally literate by scoring as an APL 3 on the initial APL competency tests or passing the mastery test(s); (2) that he/she possesses the ability to function as a productive member of society by virtue of having completed satisfactorily the Generalized Life Skills portion of the program; and (3) that he/she has a specialized or marketable job skill or has the ability to function adequately in a postsecondary setting.

Research results indicate a wide discrepancy between the competencies needed by adults and those many are able to demonstrate. There is a definite need for a competency-based high school diploma program based on survival requirements--a program that will enable adults to gain the skills and proficiencies necessary for employment and upward socioeconomic mobility in this rapidly changing technological society, and which prepares them to cope adequately with the complexities of everyday living. There is also a need for such a program to fit into existing adult and secondary education programs and to utilize already available resources. The CBHSD Program has demonstrated these characteristics. A major importance of the APL Competency-based High School Diploma Program is that it recognizes that a learning program for adults must be meaningful and relevant to them and must render them better able to care for themselves and their families. Furthermore, it is important in the community at large that the adult be able to proceed through an accredited program where he/she can both gain and demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to function proficiently within the framework of his/her environment and in response to the collective requirements of that environment.

APPENDIX A

APL INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

APL INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Public Assistance

To understand how and when to apply for public assistance.

Recreation

To know the recreational resources available in the community.

Driving

To understand driving regulations, including safety, courtesy, and rules such as having a driver's license, car license plates, etc.

Transportation/Reservations

To be able to use transportation schedules and calculate fares, to locate and use information facilities as well as request information on travel and overnight accommodations.

Information and Aid

To be able to utilize information sources in the community.

Mass Media/Public Opinion

To be aware of influences of mass media and how mass media reflects and molds public opinion and to develop critical skills for evaluating reports of mass media.

CONSUMER ECONOMICS

Advertising Techniques

To be aware of advertising techniques and to recognize appropriate and inappropriate forms of advertising.

Counting and Converting

To be able to count and convert coins and currency, and to convert weights and measures using measurement tables and mathematical operations.

Money Management

To be aware of the basic principles of money management including knowing the basics of consumer decision-making.

Income Tax

To understand the concept of income tax.

Care and Upkeep of Personal Possessions

To know basic procedures for the care and upkeep of personal possessions (home furnishings, appliances, and clothing) and to be able to use resources related to such care.

Catalog Ordering

To use catalogs to select goods and services.

Ordering Food

To know how to order food and tip in a restaurant.

Housing/Utilities

To determine housing needs and to know how to obtain housing and utilities based on those needs.

Car Buying/Maintenance

To know how to buy and maintain a car economically.

Insurance

To collect information concerning the types of insurance available and to be able to select the best insurance for the individual and his/her family.

Using Credit

To develop an understanding of credit systems.

Consumer Fraud

To know the resources available to the consumer in the face of misleading and/or fraudulent product/service claims or tactics.

World Resources

To understand the implications of consumption vis-a-vis finite world resources and to recognize that each individual pattern of consumption influences the general welfare.

Banking Services

To know the banking services available in the community.

Comparison Shopping

To know the principles of comparison shopping including:

(a) buying food
(b) knowing how to take advantage of sales
(c) using consumer guides to select goods & services.

GOVERNMENT AND LAW

Government Structure and Function

To understand the concept of government for and by the people and the structure and function of government on local, state and federal levels.

Citizens Rights and Duties

To understand your rights, duties, and responsibilities as a citizen and recognize infringements of your rights.

Protection: Criminal & Civil Law

To know the difference between criminal and civil law; to understand the court system and how to use the legal system in order to protect your rights and possessions.

Legal Documents

To become familiar with various legal documents and the obligations they incur, and to be able to secure and/or execute (or have executed) various legal documents when needed.

HEALTH

Basic Safety Measures/ Emergencies & First Aid

To understand how basic safety measures can prevent accidents and to recognize potential hazards, especially as such hazards relate to home and occupational safety. In case of emergency, to be able to apply first aid and to inform proper authorities of an accident, illness, or natural disaster.

Drug Control/Drug Abuse

To understand federal control of drugs and items related to personal use and health protection.

Needs of the Adolescent

To understand the special needs and concerns of the adolescent (and his/her parents) and to become acquainted with some ways to ease the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Self

To be aware of the various aspects of self and to use this understanding to promote personal growth and effective interpersonal coping.

Marriage and Family

To be aware of the responsibility of marriage and family including relationships between family members and to determine sources available for marriage and family counseling.

Parenting and Family Planning

To be aware of responsibilities and duties of a parent (step and natural) and to understand what family planning is and its implications, and to be able to make decisions in regard to family planning and parenthood;

And pending family planning decision, to have knowledge of methods and ways of birth control, including physiological aspects and effectiveness and costs of methods.

Pregnancy and Childbirth

To understand the physical and psychological influences of pregnancy as well as the need for proper prenatal care.

Child Rearing

To understand general child rearing practices and procedures for developing and guarding the health and safety of a child and to apply proper action in accordance with needs and resources.

Nutrition and Food Preparation

Nutrition (Part A)

To understand what constitutes a balanced diet and to plan balanced meals according to family needs and preferences.

Food Preparation (Part B)

To understand and apply various methods of food preparation and to know the fundamentals of food storage.

Preventive Care and Health Maintenance

To understand what contributes to good mental and physical health and how to maintain them.

OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Sources of Employment

To identify sources of information about available job positions or opportunities and to be able to use the information in order to obtain employment or a more satisfactory job.

Job Selection & Satisfaction/Aids to Obtaining Satisfactory Employment

To read about occupational categories, including their requirements and suitability to one's needs, knowledges and experiences.

To be aware of vocational testing and counseling and job training programs available in the community.

To determine reasons for job selection and satisfaction other than financial (e.g., location, fringe benefits).

Job Applications and Interviews

To prepare for job applications and interviews.

Employment Agencies

To understand the differences between commercial employment agencies and government employment agencies.

Effective Job Behavior

To recognize what a job calls for in terms of responsibility, attitude, and appearance and to recognize attributes which might lead to promotions and raises.

Financial & Legal Aspects of Employment

To know financial and legal aspects of employment.

APPENDIX B

LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES

APL COMPETENCY-BASED HIGH SCHOOL
DIPLOMA PROGRAM

LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES

August, 1978

Consumer Economics (CE)

CE-1 There are a number of different sources of information available to the consumer regarding the price of goods, such as the store itself, catalogs, the newspaper, and the store by way of the telephone.
- a. Identify an item that you need or want, and using the source(s) of information listed above, compare the price of this item at three different stores. Then write where you would buy this item and the reasons for your selection.
- b. Make a list of no less than five different grocery items which you often buy. Using at least one of the above sources, compare the same brand and size grocery items at three different stores. Then write which of these stores has the lowest overall cost.

CE-2
- a. Prepare a budget. First, write down your monthly take-home pay and any other income. Second, write down your usual monthly expenses, including house payments, utilities, food, gas, and recreation. Third, figure out the difference in outlay (expense) and your take-home pay.
- b. Keep a record of all expenses for a period of at least one week.

CE-3 Everyone at times buys things that they do not really need. Consumers' buying practices are influenced in many ways, including advertising and other marketing techniques, peer pressure, etc.
- a. Discuss with the Teacher the techniques of advertising, both verbal and non-verbal (music, inflection, expression, etc.), used in a particular advertisement.
- b. Select one item that you have bought as a result of some of these techniques. Discuss with the Teacher the factors that may have influenced you to buy it.

CE-4 Assume the role of a person desiring a loan. Select three of the following four sources: (a) a bank; (b) a loan (finance) company; (c) a credit union; (d) a savings and loan. Call or go by to obtain information on comparative costs and determine the best source for your loan and the reasons why.

CE-5
- a. Select a house or apartment through the want ad section of the newspaper which would fit your immediate needs and resources.
- b. Discuss with the Teacher the reasons for your decision.
- c. Many items important to your selection will not be listed in the newspaper ad. List and discuss with the Teacher at least four of these important items that you would consider before making your final decision which are not included in the ad.

CE-6 a. Using information provided by the Teacher, write three facts about each of the following types of insurance.
1. auto
2. health/accident
3. life
4. homeowners/renters

b. Select the one type of insurance that you need most and explain its importance to you.

c. Contact two agents selling this type of insurance to arrange an appointment at your home, the agent's office, or telephone interview.

d. Report the annual cost of this insurance and compare the coverage of the two policies.

e. Make a decision as to which company you would buy from and discuss your decision with the Teacher.

CE-7 Read and discuss information approved by the Teacher explaining what the metric system is and the rationale behind changing from the English system to the metric system.

CE-8 Demonstrate your ability to use measuring devices by doing the following:

a. Measure a surface in the Learning Center to within 1/8 of an inch. Then calculate the number of square feet in the surface.

b. Using the metric system, measure the same surface to within one millimeter. Then calculate the number of square meters or square millimeters in the surface.

CE-9 a. Discuss the following with the Teacher:
1. the purpose of an income tax;
2. the purpose of income tax forms;
3. the differences between the 1040 and 1040A forms.

b. Using information approved by the Teacher, fill out either a 1040 form or a 1040A form.

CE-10 a. Read the material on funerals.

b. Using the information and worksheet provided, plan a funeral of the type that would suit your family's circumstances.

c. Read the information concerning wills and legal matters.

d. List three advantages of a person having a will.

Occupational Knowledge (OK)

NOTE: Activities 1-4 under Occupational Knowledge must be completed in order as written.

OK-1 a. Discuss with the Teacher three or more advantages and three or more disadvantages of public and private employment agencies.

b. Discuss with the Teacher at least three other sources for employment, including their advantages and disadvantages.

OK-2
a. Read and discuss information on resumes approved by the Teacher.
b. Prepare a resume, which may include name, age, address, present position, past work experiences, education and training, accomplishments, honors, organizations, interests, health, and family data.
c. Using the newspaper, select at least three jobs for which you are now qualified or will be after you receive your diploma, and in which you are interested, and discuss with the Teacher the reasons for your choices.

OK-3
a. Select one of the employment ads from OK-2 and write a letter requesting an application or interview.
b. On a form approved by the Teacher, completely and neatly fill out a job application as if applying for this position.

OK-4
a. Read information about interviews which is approved by the Teacher.
b. In a role-playing situation, using your application from OK-3, have an interview for that position.

OK-5 Discuss with the Teacher at least five attributes which may lead to promotion on a job.

OK-6 Calculate your own weekly, monthly, and yearly gross and net salaries. If unemployed, you will be given an hourly wage to calculate the above, and you should assume a 20% deduction for taxes.

Health (H)

H-1
a. Prepare a list of everything you eat (meals and snacks) for one day.
b. List the four basic food groups and the number of servings of each required every day to maintain good nutrition.
c. Plan three well-balanced meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner).
d. Explain in writing what makes them well-balanced.
e. Discuss with the Teacher whether or not your actual diet (part a) was well-balanced and why..

H-2 Verbally describe each of the first aid measures called for in the following emergencies.
(a) burns
(b) shock (from injury)
(c) bleeding
(d) poisoning from aspirin, gasoline, insect spray, and sleeping pills
(e) drowning (include a discussion of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation)
(f) heart attack (include a discussion of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation--CPR)
(g) epileptic seizure
(h) choking (include a discussion of the Heimlich technique)

H-3 To be aware of the various methods of birth control, whether you choose to use them or not, chart or list five birth control methods and include the advantages and disadvantages of each (e.g., effectiveness, ineffectiveness, side effects)

H-4 Each person should be aware of procedures which would help him maintain his health. Using material approved by the Teacher, complete the following assignment on general health care.

a. Complete the attached Health Checklist. List the items which you checked "no." What "no" answers will you be able to change or do something about?

b. Checkups
   1. Read information about the checkup.
   2. Write down (a) the reason a checkup is important and (b) what things are included in a checkup.

c. Temperature
   1. Read information about temperature.
   2. Demonstrate that you can use and read an oral thermometer. Write down and be able to discuss with the Teacher the following:
      a. the different types of fever thermometers;
      b. three ways to take a person's temperature;
      c. the normal temperature for each of the three ways to take a person's temperature;
      d. the procedures to follow when the temperature is above normal.

d. Colds
   1. Read the information about colds.
   2. List four ways you can try to prevent colds.
   3. Write down what you should do when you get a cold.

e. Heart Disease
   1. Read information about heart disease.
   2. List seven conditions which can lead to heart disease.
   3. Do the following to help you better understand high blood pressure.
      a. Have your blood pressure taken. The County Health Unit will do this at no charge. (If you have had this done in the last six months, you may use that reading.)
      b. Write down <u>your</u> blood pressure and what is considered normal for a person your age.
      c. Write down the significance of the blood pressure numbers.

f. Cancer
   1. Read information about cancer.
   2. List the seven danger signals of cancer.
   3. Read pamphlets on two types of cancer <u>you</u> could have and write a brief paragraph about each.

g. Venereal Disease
   1. Read information about the two main types of venereal disease.
   2. List the symptoms of venereal disease.
   3. Write down the ways venereal disease can be cured.

h. Dental Care
   1. Read information about dental care.
   2. Write a short paragraph pertaining to proper dental hygiene.

HEALTH CHECKLIST

	Yes	No	
1.	___	___	*Do you get a chest X-ray every year?*
2.	___	___	*If you are a woman, do you have a Pap test at least once a year?*
3.	___	___	*Do you go to a doctor or health clinic when you are worried about your health?*
4.	___	___	*Do you make an effort to have a checkup regularly?*
5.	___	___	*Do you see that your children have a checkup regularly?*
6.	___	___	*When someone in your family is sick, do you take his/her temperature?*
7.	___	___	*Have all members of your family been vaccinated against preventable disease?*
8.	___	___	*Do you know the seven warning signals of cancer?*
9.	___	___	*Do you know how to help protect yourself from heart disease?*
10.	___	___	*Do you know when a doctor is needed when someone is sick?*
11.	___	___	*Do you know most of the common signs of illness?*

H-5 a. Many commercial products have labels warning of health hazards. Bring in the container of such a product and discuss with the Teacher its proper use and warnings according to the directions.
b. Bring in a bottle of prescription medicine and, from the directions, write a safe and practical schedule for taking the medicine.

H-6 Using material approved by the Teacher, write and be able to discuss information pertaining to mental health as it applies to you in everyday life. Be prepared to discuss the following;
a. ways to promote good mental health;
b. recognizing a mental health problem;
c. actions you can take to help correct the problem;
d. actions you should take if the problem cannot be corrected by you.

H-7 Each of us has many environments (physical, social, work, home, etc.). Select one environment and then do the following.

a. List three ways you negatively affect that environment. Then write what specific measures you could take that would be effective in reducing two of these three problems.
b. List three ways that environment negatively affects you. Then write what specific measures you could take that would be effective in reducing two of these three problems.

H-8 a. Using information approved by the Teacher, read about the following subjects on child care and guidance: (1) baby sitters or child care centers; (2) child care; (3) childhood diseases and disorders; (4) children with disabilities; (5) drug abuse; (6) child abuse.
b. Discuss four of the six topics with the Teacher (topics to be discussed will be selected by the Teacher at the time of the discussion).

H-9 Each person should be aware of his own strengths and weaknesses.

a. List five things that you like about yourself.
b. List two things about your personality that you would like to improve.
c. Select one of these and explain to the Teacher how you will go about making improvements.

H-10 Read a pamphlet concerning home safety. Using a checklist provided by the Teacher, perform a safety inspection of your residence and discuss your findings with the Teacher.

H-11 a. Read and study the definitions of culture provided by the Teacher.
b. Discuss the definitions with the Teacher.
c. Write your own definition of what culture is.
d. Write about your own unique culture. Include these areas of culture:
   1. foods that you eat;
   2. dress/clothing;
   3. language/dialects;
   4. family life;
   5. holiday customs/traditions;
   6. values/goals;
   7. religion.
e. Compare and contrast your culture with at least two others, one of which must be Spanish-speaking American, native American, Black American, or Anglo American.

Community Resources (CR)

CR-1 a. Collect and discuss with the Teacher one informational pamphlet from each of the four community resources in the following areas: (1) legal; (2) health; (3) recreational; and (4) educational.
b. For each resource area, write the following information:
   1. the name of the pamphlet;
   2. a brief paragraph explaining what you learned from the pamphlet;
   3. the name of the place where you obtained the pamphlet;
   4. a brief description of the services offered by the agency or community resource where you obtained the pamphlet.

CR-2
a. Use the telephone book to locate and write down the addresses and phone numbers of at least one community resource in each of the four areas listed in CR-1.
b. Prepare a list of emergency telephone numbers, including police, fire, ambulance, doctor, etc.

CR-3
a. Obtain a city map.
b. Indicate the areas where the four community services listed in CR-2 are located.
c. Indicate the area of your home, the learning center, and the hospital you would go to in case of an emergency.

CR-4 Discuss with the Teacher at least four advantages and four disadvantages of private transportation and at least four advantages and four disadvantages of public transportation.

CR-5
a. Go to the public library and obtain your library card.
b. Present proof of having used your library card by checking out a book you are interested in and showing the card and the borrowed book to the Teacher.
c. List and discuss with the Teacher five other sources of information or services provided by your library.

CR-6 All communities have activities which are sources of entertainment.
a. List at least five of these activities which are available in your community.
b. Visit a community resource that you do not normally visit. This can be either:
1. an exhibit in an art gallery, museum, or similar exhibition; or
2. a live performance (such as a dramatic or musical presentation).
c. Write a brief description of the activity and what was involved.
d. Write and discuss with the Teacher at least one thing you liked and one thing you disliked and the reasons for your opinions.
e. Determine whether or not you would attend similar events in the future and discuss your decision with the Teacher.

Government and Law (G&L)

G&L-1 Verbally explain to the Teacher the meanings of at least five vocabulary words or phrases provided by the Teacher from each of the following general areas: (a) government organization; (b) criminal law; (c) civil law; (d) voting and citizens' rights and responsibilities.

G&L-2 Present proof of participation in the process of government by registering to vote and by documenting one of the following: (a) writing a letter to a government official; (b) becoming involved in a political campaign; (c) observing a government body in session; (d) observing a court in session.

G&L-3 Using information approved by the Teacher, answer questions about various important aspects of the legal system in each of the following areas: (a) criminal law; (b) consumer law; (c) family law; and (d) housing law

G&L-4 a. Complete a programmed workbook entitled "The Electoral Process" which will be provided by the Teacher. Then discuss the workbook with the Teacher.
b. Use a sample ballot(s) to demonstrate knowledge of how to properly use a ballot and show an understanding of its content from questions asked by the Teacher.

G&L-5 Select one piece of proposed or passed legislation or court decision of public interest on the national level and one on the local level that has had a direct effect on your life. Then discuss with the Teacher the following.
a. the effect on your life
b. the pros and cons of each issue
c. future implications